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SENATE

REPORT
98-651

TRANSFERRING THE GENERAL POST OFFICE BUILDING AND THE SITE THEREOF TO THE SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION

SEPTEMBER 29 (legislative day, SEPTEMBER 24), 1984.—Ordered to be printed

Mr. STAFFORD, from the Committee on Environment and Public Works, and on behalf of Mr. MATHIAS from the Committee on Rules and Administration, submitted the following

JOINT REPORT

[To accompany H.R. 4025]

The Committees on Environment and Public Works and Rules and Administration, to which was referred the Act (H.R. 4025) to authorize the Administrator of General Services to transfer to the Smithsonian Institution, without reimbursement, the General Post Office Building and the site thereof located in the District of Columbia, and for other purposes having considered the same, reports favorably thereon without amendment and recommends that the Act do pass.

COMMITTEE ACTION

In 1983, the Senate Committee on Environment and Public Works held hearings which initiated Congressional consideration of proposals to transfer the "General Post Office" building in Washington, D.C., to the Smithsonian Institution and to relocate the U.S. International Trade Commission (ITC) to another building in downtown Washington. On May 24, testimony was received from Mr. S. Dillon Ripley, Secretary of the Smithsonian Institution, the Honorable Alfred Eckes, Chairman of the U.S. International Trade Commission, and Mr. Richard O. Haase, Commissioner of the Public Buildings Service of the General Services Administration.

Legislation to effectuate the relocation of the Commission and to transfer the property to the Smithsonian Institution was adopted by the Senate on June 29 as section 7 of S. 1287, the "Public Buildings Authorization Act of 1983." To date the House has taken no

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action on this measure, although on August 28, 1983, H.R. 4025, a similar measure, was introduced.

On February 8, 1984, S. 2271, was introduced by Senators Goldwater, Garn and Sasser and referred to the Committee on Governmental Affairs. This bill was re-referred on March 27, 1984, sequentially to the Committee on Environment and Public Works and Committee on Rules and Administration. On August 9, 1984, a joint hearing was held by the Senate Committee on Rules and Administration and the House Committee on House Administration on H.R. 4025 and S. 2271. Subsequently, H.R. 4025 was passed by the House, and the act was referred jointly to the Committee on Environment and Public Works and Committee on Rules and Administration. In separate meetings on September 26, 1984, the Committees voted to favorably report H.R. 4025, without amendment.

PURPOSE OF THE LEGISLATION

H.R. 4025 authorizes the transfer of the General Post Office Building to the Smithsonian Institution without reimbursement in accordance with the provisions of section 202 of the Federal Property and Administrative Services Act of 1949 (40 U.S.C. 483). It also directs the Administrator of the General Services Administration, at the earliest practicable date, to relocate all operations of the ITC to a single building in downtown Washington, D.C. Currently, the Commission occupies 107,295 square feet of space at three Washington, D.C. locations: the General Post Office Building, the Bicentennial Building, and the Interstate Commerce Commission Building. Enactment of H.R. 4025 will provide an opportunity for consolidation of all Commission operations which demand certain special-use space, such as hearing rooms and a printing plant, thus improving space use and efficiency of operation, and avoiding the duplication of services inherent in multiple locations.

The Administrator shall cooperate fully with the Chairman of the International Trade Commission in selecting new headquarters for the Commission. The Chairman shall have the opportunity to participate jointly with the Administrator in surveys of available buildings or other studies and investigations.

The Administrator shall inform the Chairman of the Commission in writing of his decision to relocate the operations of the Commission. The decision shall not take effect for at lest sixty days after the date the Chairman has been given written advice of the Administrator's determination, and the Chairman has thirty days during which he may request in writing a review of such determination.

To monitor the progress of the relocation, both the Administrator and the Chairman are required to report on a regular basis to their respective authorizing committees and to those of the Smithsonian Institution in the Senate and the House on the status of the Commission's relocation. until the relocation takes place, the Administrator of General Services is required to maintain the building in a manner to prevent its further deterioration and to ensure a safe and habitable workplace suitable to the normal operations of its occupants.

Finally, the bill authorizes the appropriation of $40,000,000 to the Smithsonian Institution for renovation and repair of the building after the Commission relocates and the transfer is made. Any portion of the appropriation may be transferred to the General Services Administration which, in consultation with the Smithsonian, is authorized to enter into contracts and take such other action as may be necessary to carry out the renovation and repair. No contract for this work, however, may be advertised or entered into before the end of thirty days of continuous session of Congress which begin when the Smithsonian submits to appropiate congressional committees the plans and advance engineering and design for the renovation and repair.

NEED FOR THE LEGISLATION

Information presented to the Committees indicates that in recent years there has been increased scholarly and public interest in the programs of the National Museum of American Art (NMAA), the National Portrait Gallery (NPG), and the Archives of American Art (AAA) which have become recipients of major collections of American art and its documentation. The growing collections and public responsibilities of these activities have heavily taxed the Patent Office Building, however, and their continued vitality is dependent on the availability of additional space for exhibition and scholarly purposes.

Through analyses of both the General Post Office and Patent Office buildings, the Smithsonian has evolved a development concept which focuses primarily on the General Post Office Building, but is based on using it and the Patent Office Building in an integrated manner. The concept envisions the Patent Office Building as the home of permanent exhibition galleries and basic support activities for both the National Museum of American Art and the National Portrait Gallery, while the General Post Office Building would house major changing exhibition space and other new public facilities. It would also be a focus for reseach and study of American art, as it would house the Archives of American Art, the combined library of the National Museum of American Art and the National Portrait Gallery, and related research resources. The integrated use of the two buildings is expected draw more visitors to the area and bring a new liveliness to the F Street and 8th Street malls.

The development concept proposes that the main public entrance to the General Post Office Building be located on the F Street side of the building in order to simplify public circulation between it and the Patent Office Building. The courtyard, which is a key component of the plan, would be covered with a glass canopy and transformed into an attractive sculpture garden, dining area, and public reception space. Visitors would be drawn from the public entrance and lobby on the north side of the building into this courtyard where they could circulate in and out of exhibition galleries flanking it on the east and west. Two public areas of the building would be located on the basement level. Under the south portion of the courtyard, where there is an existing sub-basement, a theater/auditorium seating upwards of 300 people would be created and

could be shared with Smithsonian activities such as the Resident Associates for performing arts and other programs. To the north and adjacent to the theater/auditorium would be 7,000 square feet of flexible exhibition space to be used for major traveling shows or changing exhibitions mounted by the museums, and for receptions related to special events in the theater/auditorium.

The NMAA/NPG Library and the Archives of American Art would be distributed on three separate, but vertically connected, levels of the building because of the size of the building, the size of these components, and the structural capabilities of different parts of the building to hold library and archival collections.

Because of the growth in responsibilities and related staff of the International Trade Commission since enactment of the Trade Act of 1974 the building can no longer accommodate all of its functions under one roof. Furthermore, its deteriorated condition is hazardous and unhealthy for those working there. The functions of the Commission require appropriate quarters convenient to the agencies, embassies, and trade associations with which it does business daily and configured in a manner to serve its needs for hearing rooms as well as library and administrative space.

In conclusion, the ITC, the Smithsonian, and the General Post Office Building would all benefit from the provisions of this bill. Relocation would provide the ITC with the opportunity to relocate it activities in a single building. The Smithsonian would be provided with needed expansion space for the National Museum of American Art, the National Portrait Gallery, and the Archives of American Art. Finally, the General Post Office Building would receive the thorough rehabilitation its historic importance warrants.

ROLLCALL VOTES

There were no rollcall votes taken during the Committee's consideration of this bill. On September 26, 1984 the Committees ordered the bill reported by voice vote.

COST OF LEGISLATION

Section 403 of the Congressional Budget and Impoundment Control Act requires each report to contain a statement of the cost of the reported bill prepared by the Congressional Budget Office. That statement follows:

U.S. CONGRESS,
CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET OFFICE,
Washington, DC, September 28, 1984.

Hon ROBERT T. STAFFORD,
Chairman, Committee on Environment and Public Works,
U.S. Senate, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: The Congressional Budget Office has prepared the attached cost estimate for H.R 4025, an act to authorize the Administrator of General Services to transfer to the Smithsonian Institution without reimbursement the General Post Office Building and the site thereof located in the District of Columbia, and for other purposes.

If you wish further details on this estimate, we will be pleased to provide them.

Sincerely,

JAMES BLUM
(For Rudolph G. Penner, Director).

CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET OFFICE COST ESTIMATE

1. Bill number: H.R. 4025.

2. Bill title: An act to authorize the Administrator of General Services to transfer to the Smithsonian Institution without reimbursement the General Post Office Building and the site thereof located in the District of Columbia, and for other purposes.

3. Bill status: As ordered reported by the Senate Committee on Environment and Public Works, September 26, 1984.

4. Bill purpose: The act authorizes the Administrator of General Services (GSA) to transfer without reimbursement the General Post Office Building in the District of Columbia to the Smithsonian Institution. The Administrator shall relocate the United States International Trade Commission (ITC) from its offices in the General Post Office Building to a site to be determined. The act authorizes the appropriation of $40 million to the Board of Regents of the Smithsonian Institution for renovation and repair of the building. The funds may be transferred as necessary to the GSA to accomplish the renovation. No contracts can be entered into for the renovation without a 30-day Congressional review of the plans and design work.

5. Estimated cost to the Federal Government:

[By fiscal years, in millions of dollars]

	1985	1986	1987	1988	1989
Authorization level	40				
Estimated outlays	8	16	16		

In addition to the amount specifically authorized for renovations, the cost of renting new offices for the ITC is expected to be $2–3 million per year. It is possible, however, that the ITC would move even if this bill is not enacted.

The costs to the Smithsonian Institution fall in function 500, while any costs to the ITC fall in function 150.

Basis of estimate: This estimate assumes the sum authorized will be appropriated. Outlays are based on an expected three-year process for design and renovation.

6. Estimated cost to State and local governments: None.

7. Estimate comparison: None.

8. Previous CBO estimate: On September 28, 1984, the Congressional Budget Office prepared a cost estimate for H.R. 4025, as ordered reported by the Senate Committee on Rules and Administration, September 26, 1984. On May 15, 1984, CBO prepared a cost estimate for H.R. 4025, as ordered reported by the House Committee on Public Works and Transportation, May 10, 1984. The estimated cost of these versions and this estimate is the same.

9. Estimate prepared by: James Hearn.
10. Estimate approved by: C. G. Nuckols (for James L. Blum, Assistant Director for Budget Analysis).

EVALUATION OF REGULATORY IMPACT

In accordance with section 11(b) of Rule XXVI of the Standing Rules of the Senate, the Committee has evaluated the regulatory impact of the bill. In the opinion of the Committees on Environment and Public Works and Rules and Administration, this bill will impose no new regulatory burdens.

CHANGES IN EXISTING LAW

In compliance with section 12 of rule XXVI of the Standing Rules of the Senate, changes in existing law made by the bill as reported are to be shown. There are no changes made to existing law by this bill.

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